

Amendments to the Claims

1. (currently amended) An inactivated virus particle, as a reinforced immunogen, prepared from a culture of cells infected with virus belonging to a group of Japanese encephalitis viruses, wherein the process of preparation comprises a step of inactivation followed by a step of purification solely by physical means, wherein a neutralizing antibody titer of the anti-serum obtained by immunization with the virus particles is about twice to about 10 times the neutralizing antibody titer of the anti-serum obtained by immunization with inactivated virus particles prepared from virus cultured in mouse brain by a step of inactivation followed by a step of purification.

2. (currently amended) A method for producing an inactivated virus particle, comprising culturing virus belonging to a group of Japanese encephalitis viruses in a cell line, inactivating the cell culture and then purifying the virus by physical means, wherein a neutralizing antibody titer of the anti-serum obtained by immunization with the virus particles is about twice to about 10 times the neutralizing antibody titer of the anti-serum obtained by immunization with inactivated virus particles prepared from virus cultured in mouse brain by a step of inactivation followed by a step of purification.

3. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein the cell line is a Vero cell.

4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the inactivating step is conducted at a temperature in a range of about 4°C to about 10°C.

6. (canceled)

7. (previously presented) The method of claim 2, wherein the virus belonging to a group of Japanese encephalitis viruses is a Beijing strain or a ThCMAR67/93 strain of Japanese encephalitis virus.

8. (canceled)

9. (original) An inactivated vaccine comprising the inactivated virus particles of claim 1.

10. (currently amended) A diagnostic agent for infectious disease caused by a group of Japanese encephalitis viruses, comprising the ~~entirety or a part of the~~ inactivated virus particles of claim 1 as an antigen.

11-12 (canceled)

13. (previously presented) The inactivated virus particle of claim 1 wherein said cells are inactivated at a temperature in a range of about 4°C to about 10°C.

14. (canceled)

15. (original) The inactivated virus particle of claim 1, wherein said culture of cells is a culture of Vero cells.

16. (original) The inactivated virus particle of claim 1, wherein the virus belonging to a group of Japanese encephalitis viruses is a Beijing strain or a ThCMAR67/93 strain of Japanese encephalitis virus.

17-18 (canceled)